(b) if so, what is the reaction of Government of U.S. Secretary's disapproval for the above gas pipeline from Iran to India and how this affects India's independent foreign policy;

(c) whether India is going to stop this pipeline in view of US expressing its concern; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) During her visit to India, Secretary of State Dr. Condoleeza Rice stated at a press conference on March 16,2005 that "I think our views concerning Iran are well-known by this time and we have communicated to the Indian Government our concems about the gas pipeline cooperation between Iran and India".

(b) to (d) The position of the Government of India is that there are ongoing discussions between India, Pakistan and Iran on this matter. India's energy requirements are growing exponentially with rapid industrialisation. We have traditionally good relations with Iran. Government would take decisions on the gas pipeline based on India's national interest.

China's claim over Arunachal Pradesh

†3141. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA:
SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether China consider Arunachal Pradesh as a disputed territory;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the total area of India over which China is making its claims; and

(d) the efforts being made by Government to protect its territory?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) China claims 90,000 square kilometers of Indian territory in the Eastern Sector.

(c) China continues to be in illegal occupation of approximately 38,000 square kilometers in the Indian State of Jammu & Kashmir. In addition, under the so-called Sino-Pakistan Boundary Agreement of 1963, Pakistan illegally ceded 5,180 square kilometers of Indian territory in Pakistan

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Occupied Kashmir to China. China illegally claims approximately 90,000 square kilometers of Indian territory in the Eastern Sector. In the Middle Sector, China illegally claims about 2000 square kilometers of Indian territory.

(d) India and China have agreed to seek a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable settlement of the boundary question through peaceful and friendly consultations. The Special Representatives appointed by the two sides have been tasked to explore the framework of a boundary settlement from the political perspective of the overall bilateral relationship on the basis of agreed political parameters and guiding principles. Pending a final resolution of the boundary question, the two sides have agreed to strictly respect and observe the line of actual control.

Agreement between India and Mauritius

3142. SHRI DARA SINGH CHAUHAN:

DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister recently visited Mauritius;

(b) if so, the details of talks held and MoU signed between India and Mauritius;

(c) whether India still gives the preferential status to Mauritius;

(d) if so, the details of benefits which accrue to Mauritius from our country;

(e) whether there is any need to review this status;

(0 if so, the details thereof;

(g) if not, the reasons therefor;

(h) whether any delegation from Mauritius is likely to visit India; and

(i) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) Yes Sir, he visited Mauritius from 30th March to 2nd April, 2005.

(b) Extensive discussions were held between India and Mauritius during the visit covering all aspects of cooperation between the two countries. Following Molls/Agreements were signed during his visit: